

**Regional Rail Steering Committee
Regional Rail Project Offices
Kaiser Building, 300 Lakeside Drive, 16th Floor
Wednesday, May 10, 2006
1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

Agenda

Meeting Objectives:

- To solicit input from the Steering Committee on technical workproducts that have lead to the formulation of the twelve Systemwide Study Alternatives

- I. Welcome & Introduction (D. Kimsey, MTC)**
 - a. Meeting Purpose & Agenda Overview**
 - b. Consent: Draft October 5, 2005 Minutes**
- II. Draft Systemwide Study Alternatives (B. Ogden, Earth Tech/Korve)**
- III. CHSRA's Bay Area to Central Valley High Speed Train Program EIR/EIS Progress Report (D. Leavitt, CHSRA)**
- IV. Public Outreach & Involvement Program (C. Alvarado, MTC)**
- V. Public Comment**
- VI. Wrap-up and Next Steps**

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Regional Rail Steering Committee

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

October 5, 2005

The second meeting of the Bay Area Regional Rail Steering Committee meeting was called to order in the Regional Rail Project Offices, Kaiser Building, Oakland, California by BART Planning Department Manager Marianne Payne at 1:36 p.m.

Welcome / Introductions

Doug Kimsey welcomed participants to the meeting and began the introductions.

PRESENT:

Project Management Team

Marianne Payne, Bay Area Rapid Transit District
Doug Kimsey, Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Ashley Nguyen, Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Howard Goode, Caltrain
Dan Leavitt, California High-Speed Rail Authority

Project Consultants/Support Team

Tom Matoff, LTK Engineering Services
Brent Ogden, Korve Engineering
Tim Erney, Korve Engineering
Karl Schaarschmidt, Earth Tech
Daniel Iacofano, MIG, Inc.
Gail Payne, MIG, Inc.
Katie Balk, MIG, Inc.

Steering Committee

Michael Bertizhoff, Port of Oakland
Steve Gregory, Port of Oakland
Kevin Connolly, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
Liz Wiecha, Transbay Joint Powers Authority
Dan Christians, Solano Transportation Authority
Laura Stuchinsky, Silicon Valley Leadership Group
Bruce Griensbeck (for Olin Woods), Sacramento Area Council of Governments
Juan Acosta, Burlington Northern Santa Fe

Stacey Mortensen, Altamont Commuter Express
Malcolm Quint, Bay Area Rapid Transit District
Chuck Purvis, Metropolitan Transportation Commission
David Kutrosky, Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority
Rob Owen, Caltrans
Lea Simpson, Caltrans
Ron West, Cambridge Systematics, Inc.
Lisa Hammon, West Contra Costa Technical Advisory Committee
Jerry Wilmoth, Union Pacific Railroad
Anthony Lee, Caltrans
Liz O'Donoghue, Amtrak
Karena Pushnik, Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation
Commission
Karen Clysdale, Transportation Agency for Monterey County
Ezra Rapport, Office of Senator Don Perata
Jean Finney, Caltrans, District Office Chief
John Nemeth, BART/SMART
James Swofford, public
Jerry Cauthen, public

Consent: Draft June 8, 2005 Minutes and Advisory Group Description

Doug Kimsey reviewed the draft minutes from June 8, 2005 Steering Committee Meeting. He also reviewed the origin of the Bay Area Regional Rail Plan Advisory Group.

Review of Regional Rail Plan's Detailed Work Plan and Schedule

Detailed Work Plan and Schedule

Brent Ogden of Korve reviewed the Detailed Work Plan and Schedule. Mr. Ogden summarized the flow of information saying that what was decided by the Project Management Team would then be passed on to the Steering Committee for review before being brought to the public.

Mr. Ogden reviewed the plan for the Charrettes to be held in the Regional Rail Room the week of October 24th. He explained that the Charrettes would help in forming the Long List of Alternatives. The Long List items will go through several rounds of Screening Criteria to be narrowed down to a shorter list.

Doug Kimsey clarified that this plan is actually two plans: the first plan reviews options for high-speed rail coming into the Bay Area, the second plan will help integrate the already established regional rail systems, looking at extensions beyond each individual rail agency. Ultimately, the plan will be adopted by MTC as stipulated in Regional Measure 2.

Carrie Lando inquired about the opportunities of integrating Northern and Western regions of the Bay Area.

Mr. Kimsey confirmed that all Bay Area regions were on the table and that the idea was to look at all existing plans and programs, as well as a list of new ideas for each region.

Liz O'Donoghue raised the issue of the final goal. She wanted to clarify if the final product was to be operational, capacity, Right of Way, new projects, expansion projects.

Mr. Kimsey explained that all of these aspects were to be examined in the plan.

Mr. Ogden stated that the plan was to begin the analysis on existing services and then will extend to other potential services. The goal is to be able to give rationale for everything that ends up on the final plan – both through the screening criteria and through the engineering analysis.

Jerry Wilmoth of Union Pacific inquired as to how the final product of the Regional Rail Plan would be used.

Doug Kimsey clarified that the goal was to use the final Regional Rail Plan to set the next generation of improvements for Bay Area Rail, as well as to help with financing mechanisms for plan implementation. New revenue sources will need to be identified for projects not currently included in MTC's long-range transportation plan's financially constrained element.

Mr. Wilmoth stated that it is difficult to do a capacity study because it is a moving target.

Mr. Ogden replied by pointing out that the Earth Tech/Korve team expects that some types of capacity improvements would be implemented in the early years of the plan yet the focus will be on the long term. The anticipated rate of growth in freight rail will be a big challenge for passenger rail. Mr. Ogden confirmed that they intend to take this level of analysis very seriously.

Mr. Wilmoth also brought up the point that there may be transfer of ownership in some of the corridors before the plan is complete. He stated that Union Pacific will continue with the corridor discussions to sell excess UP right-of-way. Due to the fact that it is a competitive market, the details of possible deals cannot be shared with the Steering Committee.

Karl Schaarschmidt, of Earth Tech, stated that the project team needed the Steering Committee members to give input on their agency's long-range plans, but it also realized that that current market situations could change the short-term look of the plan.

Mr. Ogden provided an example from Southern California where SP & UP railroads were working together on a study. At the end of the study, the set of projections generated were not “discomforting”. In the end, they moved forward with what ended up being a billion dollar project.

Mr. Kimsey stated that if there were further follow-up questions, the Steering Committee members could feel free to see the Project Management Team after the meeting.

Mr. Ogden added that one of the goals of the plan would be to integrate High Speed Rail to the Bay Area Rail Network with compatibility and connectivity.

Charrettes

Brent Ogden presented the details of the Charrettes being held at the Regional Rail Room (16th floor BART) on the week of October 24th.

Mr. Kimsey asked if there were any questions regarding the Charrettes schedule.

Kevin Connolly of VTA pointed out that the initial conceptual alternatives are going to be important and inquired when the Steering Committee would get a chance to review them.

Mr. Ogden explained that the next Steering Committee meeting will focus on the results of the initial conceptual alternatives definitions as well as on proposed screening criteria. He emphasized that until screening criteria was developed by the Steering Committee, they would not move forward on defining conceptual alternatives. Mr. Ogden clarified that each product of the study would be reviewed by the Project Management Team before being submitted to the Steering Committee. Until Steering Committee approval, everything should be considered in draft form.

Mr. Kimsey asked if there were any other questions on the Charrettes.

Briefing on CHSRA’s Efforts and Bay Area to Central Valley EIR/EIS

Dan Leavitt of CHSRA passed out a two-year EIR/EIS schedule as well as general information about the CHSRA. Mr. Leavitt explained that the CHSRA has been a state agency since 1997, and has a mission to oversee the implementation of the high-speed rail in California. The HSR is in the planning process, and funding is not yet in place. The final statewide planning document will be certified for environmental clearance in November. The CHSRA still needs to do project specific environmental clearance on defined segments. For example, the CHSRA was unable to select a preferred alignment between the Central Valley and the Bay Area so instead a broad corridor exists between Pacheco Pass and Altamont Pass. The CHSRA is beginning the programmatic EIS/EIR on this segment in coordination with the Regional Rail Plan. He noted that the Regional Rail Plan

Public Outreach Workshops would be held in conjunction with the CHSRA Scoping Meetings for the Central Valley – Bay Area segment.

Doug Kimsey asked if there were any questions regarding the CHSRA Study.

Briefing on Bay Area/California High-Speed Rail Ridership and Revenue Forecasting Study.

Chuck Purvis of MTC introduced Ron West of Cambridge Systematics. Ron West gave a PowerPoint presentation on the ridership and revenue forecasting of the CHSRA study.

A question was asked about whether the trip choice considers comfort and security.

Mr. West stated that the team is using an expert review panel, which includes someone from France. There are no models in the U.S. and there are too many differences with the models that exist.

Mr. West replied that they are varying time, cost and reliability as the key factors. Chuck Purvis added that more system characteristics in the survey would make it too overwhelming so instead they are describing the characteristics in a front piece.

Mr. Rapport stated that the focus of the data collection should be on different features of the train track.

Mr. West volunteered to send Mr. Rapport a copy of the survey questions.

Mr. Rapport emphasized the importance of examining ranges of transportation, for example: comparing car to train as mode of transportation.

Dan Leavitt commented that the stated preference surveys considered other attributes such as seating room, reliability, smooth ride, etc.

Ms. O'Donoghue offered that Amtrak has a survey that they use that CHSRA might be interested in.

Mr. West stated that Steve Roberts from Amtrak had been quite helpful in providing CHSRA with existing data.

Liz Weicha asked how large the survey sample would be.

Mr. West answered that 500 Rail and Airport location surveys would be taken as well as 1500 Automobile drivers surveyed for a total of 2,500 completed surveys.

Bruce Greinsbeck of SACOG inquired as to whether the air passengers at the airport would be offered the Air vs. High Speed Rail comparison in the survey. He also inquired about whether the airport would be treated as one egress point. There is a higher percent of business travelers who want to go to downtown Sacramento so it is important to show the different egress points.

Mr. West answered yes they would be treating the airport as a single egress point, as well as the downtown Sacramento Station. He has a matrix with station information such as location, park and ride and other amenities.

Ms. Weicha inquired about influence of surveying at a Northern California airport versus Southern California.

Mr. West pointed out that although the surveys would be collected at a Northern CA airport, it was important to remember Sacramento is both an arrival spot for Northern Californians and a destination for those traveling to/from Southern California.

Laura Stuchinsky of SVLG asked if the study will be able to anticipate Gilroy and other Northern California ridership. Can you use ABAG numbers to anticipate riders?

Mr. West said that the regional models do not cover the full state so there is a need for more data to better understand interregional trips.

John Nemeth of SMART pointed out that the downside of the survey is that what people say they are going to do is not always close enough to what they actually do.

Mr. West responded that it is the best option for garnering people's opinions and that they are attempting to make it as realistic as possible to get accurate results.

Mr. Greinsbeck inquired as to whether urban models would predict "inter-urban" ridership.

Mr. West responded that yes they would.

Mr. Purvis stated that model systems will be completed by January.

Tom Matoff clarified that as Regional Rail Phase I winds down the goal is to have a half dozen options to analyze. The regional data will be given to the HSR project, which will provide forecast numbers for the region.

Ms. O'Donoghue asked about the time frame for the study and forecast horizons.

Mr. Purvis responded that the forecast horizons are the years 2030, 2040 and 2050.

Daniel Iacofano asked if the team is using ridership from other countries.

Mr. West responded with no, but informed the group that they do have experts on the HSR panel to serve as reality check on the breakdown of passengers.

Mr. Purvis added that they are also looking at Japanese and European Rail Systems to bracket the analyses.

Ms. O'Donoghue asked for clarification on whether there would be a land use planning component to Regional Rail up front, or if it would all be happening at the end.

Mr. Schaarschmidt responded that there would be an initial land-use and economic forecast done up front so that we can properly plan around people and freight.

Mr. Ogden stated that the white papers will look at different futures to the extent that there will be significantly different land use base numbers. Even though the White Paper comes up front, there will be room to move at the end.

In answer to Ms. O'Donoghue's question, Mr. West stated that, as part of the HSR model, they will be planning out to 2050 for the land use projections using ABAG projections.

Ms. O'Donoghue wanted to know how the team will make decisions on land use that far ahead.

Mr. Purvis responded that the State Department has population forecasting figures out to the year 2050. There are other data sets also that will be used.

Mr. Rapport stated that the Public Policy Institute has studied the impacts of high-speed rail in the Central Valley projecting to 2040.

Mr. Greinsbeck added that the influence of HSR on the Central Valley is a big issue.

Mr. West added that not a lot of data sources go past 2030.

James Swofford said that George C. Smith of Caltrans and the UTC research centers are studying the affects of land use and modal choice.

Mr. Kimsey asked if there were any further questions.

Discussion of Systems Issues, Initial Alternatives and Screening Criteria

Brent Ogden of Earth Tech gave a PowerPoint presentation on preliminary ideas for conceptual alternatives definitions and screening criteria.

Ms. O'Donoghue asked about which of the time horizons, 2030 and 2050, they should have in mind.

Mr. Ogden responded with the longer years.

Ms. O'Donoghue inquired if the baseline was not the service of today.

Mr. Ogden stated that the baseline would include projects in MTC's, long-range transportation plan financially constrained element.

Ms. O'Donoghue stated that she was still thinking about the end result and, although she understood the long-term need, the screening criteria seemed fairly immediate. She added that she would be more interested in what could happen sooner, rather than a vision of 2050.

Howard Goode clarified by saying that the study also calls for short- (5-10 year) and mid-term (10-25 years) timelines that will be created simultaneously with the long-term plan.

Mr. Schaarschmidt told the group that the idea is to create a master plan for 50 years into the future and then work back so that short- and mid-term plans will lead in the direction of the 50-year plan.

Mr. Connolly stated that the plan seemed to be based around BART as core, which he agreed is important, but he also wanted emphasis placed on feeder services such as MUNI and Santa Clara County. He added that you must have excellent feeder services that are well incorporated into the plan.

Mr. Ogden responded that ridership forecasts will inform the study about service levels necessary for other connecting modes to support regional rail alternatives.

Mr. Kimsey pointed out that there would be a separate connectivity study being done at 23 stations throughout the Bay Area.

Mr. Connolly responded that this regional rail effort is theorizing a much more enhanced rail system than the status quo, which is being studied in the connectivity report.

Mr. Schaarschmidt added that we want to make sure all Bay Area rail has seamless connectivity in this plan.

Mr. Rapport stated that additional capacity may be needed to meet this need.

Mr. Kimsey added that the station level will be most helpful in informing the study regarding the number of people that are transferring.

Mr. Connolly reported that we tend to see the glass half empty. We're trying to make rail more user friendly and a viable option.

Mr. Rapport stated that the idea behind the Steering Committee is to help their individual agencies see how they can play a part in the Regional Rail plan as a whole and to see how agencies will support additional capacity.

Mr. Kimsey added that it was a valid point and that capacity issues and constraints would have to be examined.

Mr. Goode inquired if Mr. Ogden's presentation would be used in the Charrettes.

Mr. Ogden responded yes or sent via email.

Review of Round One Outreach Plan & Schedule

Daniel Iacofano of MIG reviewed the Round One Outreach Plan and Workshop Schedule with the Steering Committee.

David Kutrosky wanted to know how the meetings are being publicized.

Ashley Nguyen stated that the meetings will be publicized by press releases, emails and scoping meeting notifications.

A question was asked whether the outlying MPOs will be notified.

Ms. Nguyen stated that they are working with StanCOG in Modesto and the San Joaquin Council of Governments.

Wrap-up and Next Steps

Doug Kimsey encouraged all the Steering Committee members to attend the Charrettes and weigh-in with their views, issues and alternatives for the Regional Rail Study.

Brent Ogden reported that Charrettes invites would start going out on October 6th.

The next Regional Rail Steering Committee Meeting was tentatively scheduled for:

Wednesday, March 1, 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm yet may need to be changed for mid February.

Adjournment

This meeting of the Regional Rail Steering Committee adjourned at 4:30 pm.